

Dr. Richard Henry Lee Jones – NCCU Director of Bands (1958 -1967)

[Richard Henry Lee Jones](#), from Greensboro, was known as "Trummy" by his bandmates, after Trummy Young of the Jimmie Lunceford band. He was completing his freshman year at A&T when [he enlisted in the Navy](#).

He was born in Summerfield, NC on December 9, 1923.

Jones didn't begin playing music until his senior year at Dudley High School. After the war, he returned to A&T and graduated in 1949. He played with the Rhythm Vets and was recorded on the soundtrack to the 1947 musical comedy featurette "Pitch a Boogie Woogie," which was made in Greenville, NC.

After graduation from A&T, he returned to Greenville as band director at Eppes High School, 1949-50, after which he went back to school, earning his Masters of Music from Northwestern University in 1951. At Northwestern, he also played trombone and baritone horn in the university's marching, concert, pep and jazz bands, the brass quartet, and the symphony orchestra. In 1950-51, he taught at West Virginia State, from 1952-55 at Alabama State, from 1955-57 at A&T, in 1958 at Jarvis Christian College, and from **1958-67 at North Carolina Central**.

At North Carolina Central, he is credited with taking the band to new levels of excellence, leading them in performances at the 1961 inauguration of Governor Terry Sanford and at half-time during a 1961 game between the New York Giants and Dallas Cowboys at Yankee Stadium.

He earned his PhD from Boston University in 1970 and then taught for 10 years in Maryland public schools. From 1980-96, he taught and directed the band at Fayetteville State University.

Over his long and distinguished career as a musician, Dr. Richard Jones played with the Fayetteville Symphony, Brass Band, Symphonic Band, and the Area Jazz Band; in the Triangle Jazz Ensemble in Durham; and the N.C. Jazz Ensemble. He was also frequently hired as a backup musician for traveling performers, working on stage with Sam Cook, Billy Eckstine, Chuck Berry, Betty Carter, Gladys Knight, and the Temptations, among many others.